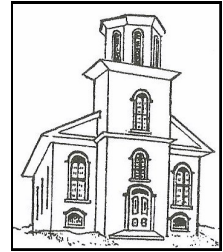


**PRESERVE THE PAST FOR THE FUTURE**

**CLINTON HISTORICAL  
SOCIETY  
NEWSLETTER**



**February 2017**

**CLINTON'S CENTENNIAL UP NEXT**

In July 1887 Clintonians staged a huge celebration of the 100 years since Moses Foote and other heads of families from Connecticut came to begin our village. Our President Wade Lallier will present a program on Sunday, February 12 (Lincoln's birthday) about the centennial.

Wade took over in November after the sudden death of Jerry Semchenko and now leads the Society. He has been a member of the Board of Directors and now will fill Jerry's term to May 2017.

Wade, a graduate of Syracuse University, has passion for the history of the Chenango Canal and has a book in preparation about the canal which went through Clinton between 1836 and 1878.

As president for a brief period Wade has led the Society to install a new and updated computer system and has suggested a five year plan which includes hiring a part-time administrator.

Learn all about how Clinton commemorated its first 100 years on February 12th. Refreshments will be available after the program. Spend Lincoln's birthday with us.

**RECENT BOARD ACTIONS**

1- at the December meeting two volunteers Rose Raymond and Eunice Zoeckler have been appointed co-curators in charge of the Society's collection. They will organize and make accessible the numerous pictures, files, and documents to the members and the public.

2- at the January meeting Connecting Point Computers at 4452 Commercial Drive was awarded a contract to install a new server and other computer components.

3- Judy Sweet and Doug Walters, from Strategic Financial Advisors, reviewed the Society's investments the past 12 months. The recent bequest from Frank Lorenz' estate will be invested according to the Society's investment policy.

Clinton Historical Society  
Founded in 1962

### DIRECTORS

Mary Benson Byrd- secretary  
Ruth Cosgrove- vice-president  
John Crossley  
Barbara Decker  
Joseph Ellis  
Lisa Firsching- treasurer  
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Wade Lallier- president  
Barbara Owens

Richard Williams- editor

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**Open Hours:** Wednesday 1-4  
and Saturday 1-4

**Dues-** \$12.00 individual 1 year; \$30.00 3 years; families/businesses; \$17.00 1 year; \$45.00 3 years; friends, \$25.00, and contributing \$50.00

## THANK YOU YEAR-END APPEAL DONORS

34 members donated to the year-end appeal bringing in \$1450.00; this is appreciated by the Board. Last year 50 members donated about \$3000.00.

Our thanks to Kenneth Ortega, Fred Burrows, David Sinclair, Ms. Dee Gurdo, Lou Parrotta, Judith V. Sweet, William Gale, Gareth A. Evans, Donna Maroney, Mary Benson Byrd, Harold & Lucy Zohne, Mrs. Robert Sheridan, Les & Nan LaBrecque, Dick & Jean Williams, Janet Cackett, Warren & Lori Scoones, Margaret & Ronald Bornick, Hart & Millie Anway, James Grande & William Sequin, Bill & Margie Thickstun, Kenneth Shilkret, Scott Leonard, Dr. Matt Weber, John Dahlin & Alice Root, George & Anne Gennings, Charlene Zebley, Jay & Hermine Williams, Thomas & Eleanor Scott, Amy Smith, Sandy Scofield, James & Gretchen Balch, George & Ofelia Dale, Claire Burns, and Patrick McMahon.

Memorial donations have also been recently received in memory of Mrs. Emily Philips and Jerry Semchenko.

Donations and dues from members who work or are retired from **matching gift** firms double the amount. Check with your personnel or human relations department to see what paper work is required. A few retired GE members have used this program over the years.



One of the many summer 2016 activities of the Society was a debut of another American Girl Doll in conjunction with the Kirkland Town Library. Beth Tegart, left, and Anne DeBraggio, right, are shown holding the two new dolls.

## FEBRUARY IS BLACK HISTORY MONTH

### Slaves Rescued in Utica

Prior to the Civil War fugitive slave laws sought to capture runaway slaves from the south and return them to their owners. The famous "Jerry" rescue in Syracuse occurred in 1851, but Utica had a similar rescue in December 1836.

"When two Negro men were claimed as fugitive slaves in Utica, several members of the Executive Committee of the state anti-slavery society immediately took an active part. The Negroes were in Judge Hayden's office, taken there by a constable in Utica. Hayden found that two Virginians were testifying that the Negroes were fugitive slaves. A lawyer, Alvan Stewart, protested that the Negroes were not under legal arrest and were being treated without due legal process. A trial was set for the following day, and the colored men put in a court house room, guarded by the two slave-catchers who were hoping to earn \$1200 reward for returning these men to the South.

Stewart did not get a chance to defend the men, because that evening a large group of colored people broke down the doors of the room where the men were held and released them." From *Friend of Man*, January 5, 1837 and January 27, 1837

From: **PROCEEDINGS OF THE NEW YORK ANTI-SLAVERY CONVENTION IN UTICA OCTOBER 21, 1835**

"An anti-slavery society met in a Bleecker Street church in October 1835, but a large number of persons., in a disorderly and boisterous manner, crowded into the building.....This committee created so much disturbance as to entirely interrupt the proceedings of the convention. The convention could not proceed so it adjourned. Delegate Gerrit Smith of Peterboro, New York invited the convention to Peterboro where it reconvened the following day.

These two events in Utica in the mid-1830's testify to the anti and pro slavery sentiments of Oneida County citizens. The convention passed several resolutions including this one:

"Resolved, that since Slavery is a rude and presumptuous invasion of the prerogatives of Jehovah who has expressly declared "All souls are mine," its abolition demands the moral energies of the Christian World.

Note: slavery was phased out in New York State by 1827, and free blacks lived here as well as runaway slaves who passed through on route to Canada.

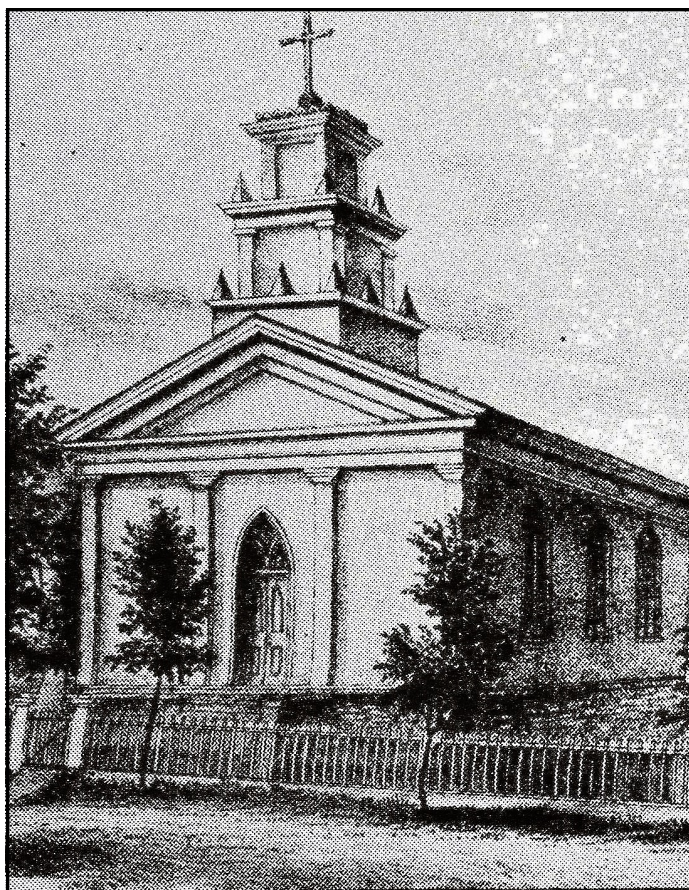
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The January 2016 Newsletter had an item about the last slave in Kirkland to die.

Also in the March 2016 Newsletter a brief item told of Louise Jacobs (1813-1897), a daughter of a slave, who attended Rev. Hiram H. Kellogg's Young Ladies Domestic Seminary in 1849. This was at the corner of Mulberry and Kellogg streets.

A few of our early settlers such as Nathaniel Griffin did keep a few slaves prior to 1827 when New York State emancipated all slaves.





*St. Mary's 1st Church*

## How Old Is New York State?

When did New York begin? When did the Colony of New York end? Independence from England arrived on July 9, 1776, however, the state did not have a constitution until April 20, 1777. The new constitution was read and officially proclaimed on April 22, 1777 so this April New York State will be 240 years old. The constitution was adopted by the Convention of Representatives of the State of New York in session in Kingston, New York as the British held New York City.

### St. MARY'S 1ST CHURCH

Local Catholics worshiped in their new church at Marvin and Prospect streets starting in 1854; it was dedicated October 24, 1854. Rev. William A. Coghlan was first pastor 1850-1862.

This church was a wooden structure, "very simple and unpretentious in appearance," according to Rev. Vincent Kelly's "Never Left Unaided" history of the parish.

This first church was torn down in June 1909 and the present St. Mary's Church started. It was dedicated January 5, 1913.



The Society presents informative and interesting programs throughout the year. Pictured above at left is President Wade Lallier, Bill Elliot, and Barbara Courture at the 40th joint meeting of the New Hartford and Clinton societies in November. Elliot's topic was the Chenango Canal between Oriskany Falls and Utica. The right picture has January 2017 presenter Douglas Ambrose and Society vice-president Ruth Cosgrove standing next to Samuel Kirkland's portrait. Ambrose told of Kirkland's religious tenets and his Calvinistic beliefs to a crowd of 85 people.